

# THE DAILY REBEL.

Once on Market Street, over the Bank of Tennessee.

CHATTANOOGA:  
FRIDAY MORNING, DEC. 12, 1862.

## THE SITUATION.

We have nothing additional from the front. The "prodigious energies" of Rosecrans to strike a blow near Nashville," mentioned in a late copy of the Louisville Journal, have not been developed as yet. That general, it is said, is still engaged in preparations on an extensive scale to procure subsistence for his army, prior to an advance towards Murfreesboro. It is generally believed that the forces under Morgan and Forrest, will materially interfere with that arrangement. Atlanta accounts Gen. Forrest was operating on the Memphis and Clarksville Road, having destroyed a portion of the track over that road and burned the bridge over the Tennessee at Danville.

For news relating to the campaign in Virginia and North Carolina, the reader is referred to our telegraphic column in to-day's *REBEL*.

## SOME REFLECTIONS ON THE CONDUCT OF THE WAR IN THE WEST.

The war in the West—by which we mean the military operations in the country west of the Cumberland mountains—has been, from the beginning, one of extreme toil to the soldier and hardship to the citizen, and of discouragement to both.

History, it is true, will celebrate our triumphs at Lexington, Oak Hills, Belmont, Elkhorn, Shiloh, Vicksburg, Iuka and Perryville, while it will wreath a chapter of unadying laurel for the brows of the suffering but patient and heroic soldiers of Fishin' Creek, Fort Donelson and Corinth.

These victories and disasters will alike attest, through coming time, the courage, patriotism, endurance and splendid heroism of the armies of the West. These armies, when united, were invincible; when separated, they have shown how nobly and how perfectly they could embody a solemn hope, and sink, overwhelmed, to the earth and to the grave, chanting the Roman bard's—

"Dulce est discere et pro patria mori."

The individual and collective valor displayed on these occasions has never been excelled by any troops on this continent. Whether defeated or victorious, the armies of the West, together and separate, have never permitted the slightest shadow to cloud the character of the patriot soldier. On the march, in the camp, when disease passed with unrestrained step among them, when faintly clad and poorly fed, in the bright period of victory, and in the gloomy hour of defeat, these soldiers have exhibited always the same high qualities of moderation, steadfastness, patience, courage, perseverance and virtuous manliness. In the midst of all their vicissitudes, and all the bitter scenes and events through which they have passed, such they were—and such at this moment they are, in proportion to numbers, in point of discipline, and spirit and devotion and bravery, constituting armies equal to the best.

Yet, on our part, the war in the West has been, from the outset, a constant and self-repeating failure. Notwithstanding these innumerable victories, and countless numbers of daring and brilliant exploits besides, of great value in themselves, we have perpetually lost ground. We have, temporarily, to say the least, lost Kentucky, lost Missouri, lost half of Tennessee, lost in Louisiana, in Texas, in Arkansas, in Mississippi. Our lead mines, our wheat fields, our hog pens, our fat herds are in the hands of the foe—to say nothing of our citizens, our aged fathers, our wives, our sisters and little children, subject to plunder, and outrage, and insult, to bondage, to extortions of oath, and upon conscience; our courts suspended, our pulpits invaded, and all the other horrors attending such an invasion by such a foe.

Thus will history reproduce it to our children—a day upon such facts will posterity review and pass judgment.

What evil genius has presided in our councils and guided our steps into these calamitous paths? It did not appear in the shape of an unwilling and cowardly soldiery. We have seen how truly they have borne themselves. That genius must have consisted in one of three things: 1. An insufficient force. 2. An indefensible country. Or, 3. In unskillful and incompetent management. To review these three propositions is not our purpose; rather to present them to the consideration of the Administration agents in the West.

It is granted, the original line of defense was too long for the means of holding it. We simply undertook too much. When it was shortened, it was changed also in its most material points. This change was made necessary by the very events which inclosed us in our ignorance of our ability

to hold the original line. The change yielded Kentucky and Middle Tennessee. After this, it was presumed we could hold the new line. This was also a delusion. New complications, resulting in the capture of New Orleans, required new combinations. They were made, Vicksburg stood, and nature defended us at Tupelo.

We recuperated, and took a new departure. Our forces was deemed not only sufficient for resistance, but aggression. A new campaign was resolved and decided. No one will question the brilliancy of the conception; for the step from Tupelo, Mississippi, to the suburbs of Louisville, Kentucky, was truly magnificent. It restored to us a portion of Middle Tennessee which the presence of the army is required to hold. It gave us also some commissary and Quartermaster's stores of substantial value. This is something. But it left an inadequate army behind for the protection of the line we had occupied. To regain this line seems to require the giving up of this same Middle Tennessee, rich and abundant as it is. Next result: nothing, except the stores, before said.

We will be candid. It is much easier to point out defects in a military campaign or series of campaigns, after witnessing the results, than to plan them. It requires a vast amount of military skill and prudence to enable a commander to steer clear of all blunders, and even capital ones. We have had three very excellent and able generals, and now have the fourth. Those of the past we truly respect. We will not berate them. But it is justice and truth to say that the first, whose duty it became to confront the original line, did it in a masterly manner, and was cut off before his plans were consummated. The second saved the army by a judicious and most successful retreat. The third mobilized the materials in his hand into a most splendid and effective body of soldiers. The core of the matter, however, is this: that a retreat should have become necessary, and that so magnificient a body of troops were not manipulated to a better purpose.

Of the present commander, the West entertains the very highest expectations, both popular and ardent. We trust he may be equal to them and to his duties. We assume that the forces under his command are sufficient in numbers, as we know them to be in all other respects, to resist successfully the extraordinary pressure which is being urged upon us. We think the country is defensible. The season, the disposition of his forces, and those of the enemy, the nature and character of the country, together with other circumstances, will render the defense most difficult, and will call into action all the judgment, tact, and dash which have been ascribed to the new commander. His task is greatly more difficult than that of either of his predecessors. It can, nevertheless, be accomplished. The country can sustain but few military blunders in our present situation. Two things are alike necessary strategy and fighting.

The report of Secretary Welles, of the Yankee Navy Department, occupies twelve columns of small type in the Pennsylvania Inquirer, giving an elaborate but wholly favorable history of the exploits in that branch of the service during the past year. Mr. Welles congratulates his government and country on the maintenance of a blockade of gigantic proportions. He also states that eminent foreign authorities have denounced the blockade as "a material responsibility," which is true—but the further states, which is wholly untrue, that the same eminent authorities, with a list in their hands of all the vessels which had evaded or escaped the vigilance of our blockading fleet, could not refuse in their official statements to admit with reluctant坦然 that the proof of the efficiency of the blockade was conspicuous and wholly conclusive, and that in my previous war had the ports of an enemy's country been effectually closed by a naval force." He also informs his government, that there have been captured and reported to the Department three hundred and ninety vessels of all descriptions, making a total of five hundred and forty three vessels that have been seized since the blockade has been instituted. He also informs his government, that there have been captured and reported to the Department three hundred and ninety vessels of all descriptions, making a total of five hundred and forty three vessels that have been seized since the blockade has been instituted. He also informs his government, that there have been captured and reported to the Department three hundred and ninety vessels of all descriptions, making a total of five hundred and forty three vessels that have been seized since the blockade has been instituted. 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